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UNCLAS MAPUTO 001585

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MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP  
SENSITIVE  
FOR AF/FO AND AF/S  
MCC PASS TO BRIGGS AND GAULL  
E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [MZ](#)  
SUBJECT: MOZAMBIKAN GENERAL ELECTIONS: PROVINCIAL  
TABULATION DELAYED

REF: MAPUTO 1572 AND PREVIOUS

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1. (U) Although the provincial vote tabulation should have begun December 3, as of December 6, it had started in only Nampula, Zambezia and Sofala provinces. According to National Elections Commission (CNE) spokesman Filipe Mondlate, data entry and tabulation should begin December 7 in another two -- Gaza and Inhambane -- and Maputo city. Mondlate attributed delays to continuing heavy rains, particularly in the north of the country, as well as issues with installation of tabulation software. By law, provincial tabulation must be completed by Thursday, December 9. Considering these widespread delays, it is unlikely this deadline will be met. (Comment: Missing the deadline will not be considered a major issue and will not jeopardize the election. End Comment.) As of early afternoon on December 7, tabulation had not yet begun at the national level.

2. (U) The CNE also announced on December 6 its decision not to reschedule voting in areas where polling stations did not open due to delays in delivery of voting materials because of heavy downpours. The CNE said that the law only permitted rescheduling in situations in which voting had been interrupted, and it also noted the relatively small number of voters affected. This decision will affect 24,943 registered voters in 43 polling stations in Tete and Cabo Delgado provinces.

3. (SBU) While it appears clear that Guebuza has won handily, international election observers remain concerned about the reclassification of initially invalid votes (nulos). In 1999, roughly ten percent of votes were nulos, with roughly 4 percent ultimately reclassified as valid. If the percentages are similar this year, there could be approximately 350,000 nulos and 140,000 could be reclassified. Observers from the European Union, the Carter Center and other international missions were called to the CNE on December 6 to witness the start of the reconsideration process. However, according to an EU mission source, observers were provided an explanation of the process and then asked to leave before the reconsideration began. Reconsideration is being carried out by teams of two officials, one each representing FRELIMO and RENAMO. The source also stated that the CNE did not plan to provide a final report on the reclassification process, including what criteria were used, as requested by the observer missions (ref B).

4. (SBU) It also remains unclear to what extent the CNE will accommodate the desire of the EU and the Carter Center for the CNE to make public the reasons for its decisions on polling station results excluded at the provincial level. These decisions are not expected to begin until later this week.

LA LIME